

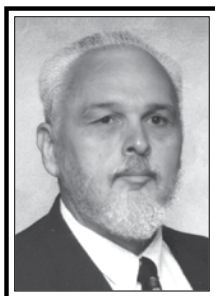
The Berea Baptist Banner

"Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth" Ps. 60:4

The Nation Israel-Beloved Enemies

By Curtis Pugh
of Poteau, Oklahoma

The results of recent polling indicates that one fourth of the world and nine percent of Americans are anti-Semitic. This is distressing news, but indicates how the stage is being set for end time events. Ezekiel 38:12 says: **"To take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now**



inhabited, and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land." Most everyone who has written upon this verse seems to
♦ (Continued on page 142)

When Gog Meets God

Milburn Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)



North of Palestine is a nation occupying one-fifth of the earth's surface or twelve million square miles. I refer to the land of Russia and her satellites. Soviet Russian occupies 8,647,250 square miles and her satellites about four million. Russia and her satellites have a population of over nine hundred million people. She probably controls thirty to forty per cent of the world's population

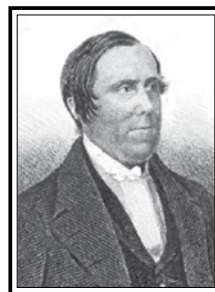
one way or another. Russia is the king of the north. Her dominion extends from the Baltic Sea to the Pacific Ocean, a two-continent empire spreading over Europe and Asia.

One of the most significant events in the last quarter of a century is the remarkable rise
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What Is Conversion?

By James Smith
(1802 - 1862)

Conversion is the turning of the soul, from error to truth, from sin to holiness, from works to Jesus, and from Satan to God. Man has turned his back upon God; in conversion he turns his face to God. Man has closed his ear against God, when converted, he says, "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening." Man is in open rebellion against God; in conversion, he throws down his



weapons, and submits to God. Man is the enemy of God; in conversion, he seeks to be reconciled to God.
Conversion changes a hardened sinner--into a childlike believer; who comes to Jesus to be taught, cries to the Lord for salvation, and meekly stoops to learn
♦ (Continued on page 150)

Faithful Christians Need to Be Patriots

By Matthew Stepp
of Wayne, West Virginia



"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and

to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (I Tim. 2:1-4).
Can you be a faithful Christian and not be a patriot?
I thought of this passage in Timothy and had to answer my question: No. Simply put, God ordained government, and
♦ (Continued on page 150)

Do not brag with the Pharisee,

"...God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican" (Luke 18:11).

but beg with the Publican.

"...standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18:13).

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The purpose of the Berea Baptist Banner is as follows:

1. To honor God and to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. To preach the gospel to lost sinners.
3. To spread the whole counsel of God's Word.
4. To encourage God's preachers and to strength-en His churches in the most holy faith.
5. To motivate God's children to a closer fellow-ship around His Word.
6. To inform people of world events in light of Bible prophecy.
7. To condemn and expose error wherever it may rear its ugly head.
8. To stimulate Christian growth in grace.
9. To make the Devil and his demons as mad as possible.

The Nation Israel-

(Continued from page 141) ♦

be in agreement: this "people that are gathered out of the nations" refers to those Jews who are living "in the midst of the land" - i.e. in the land promised to them and given to them by God Himself. The stage is being set even as this article is being written. The major players are upon the stage. It seems that Russia will move against them and no earthly help will be found for little Israel. And the political climate of our own United States, filled as it is with prejudice and fear, is turning away from Israel to the point that even some who claim to be Christians are now opposing God's covenant people and their Zion.

Before proceeding further along in this article let me say this: this preacher does not understand how anyone who professes to believe the Bible and who professes to be a follower of God's Lamb can be anti-Semitic. I will go further: I do not see how any child of God can be anti-Zionist: that is, I do not see how any Christian can oppose the present state of Israel. The Bible says, **"Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her"** (Isa. 66:10). One commentator says of this verse: "The idea which is presented in this verse is, that it is the duty of all who love Zion to sympathize in her joys," (Albert Barnes). You cannot love Israel and hate her Zion (land and government) any more than you can claim to love Americans, but desire to see her institutions of learning, her homes, businesses and government destroyed by an atomic bomb.

God said to Abraham, **"And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make**

thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:2-3). History has borne this out: those nations that have favored Israel have been blessed and those that have stood against Israel have not stood long. Hitler thought to establish a thousand year Reich where anti-Semitism was official government policy, but God had other plans. The Nazi industrial powerhouse was destroyed. Death, suffering and desolation were heaped upon Nazi Germany and her allies known as the Axis powers. Had it not been for the policy of giving Germany, Italy and Japan billions of dollars in aid to rebuild their countries, much of them would still be desolate ruins.

Many have questioned why God has so greatly blessed the North American continent: especially the United States of America. History is replete with examples that prove that neither the citizens or the government of this country have been just and righteous. So we must exclude the idea that God has blessed the United States because she has been worthy of God's blessings. Neither can it be demonstrated that the citizens of these United States have in the main believed the truth. Among the great variety of churches and religious groups proliferating on the American landscape, few have stood for Bible truth: the majority, when unrestrained by law, have persecuted those their "brethren" who dissented from the majority view. There are, it seems, only two reasons that God has blessed these United States: first, though perhaps not foremost, because God in His sovereignty planted

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The Nation Israel-

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His kind of churches here. These churches have been missionary churches and sought to spread the gospel around the world, and with somewhat lesser zeal among the native inhabitants of this continent – and, perhaps with even lesser zeal, among the descendants of those Africans brought here as slaves. (If you doubt the veracity of this last sentence, read Isaac McCoy's History of American Indian Missions). Ah, but perhaps to see the greater reason for God's blessing upon these United States we should look at how the government of this country has looked upon the Zionist movement – the return of the Jews to their rightful homeland. True it was with prodding and political pressure from American Jews and others, but the United States government has generally not only welcomed Jews to her shores, but has favored the present government of Israel: what some have called the modern Zionist movement. We fear what shall come upon this country if she continues to back away from Israel. It is a fearful and terrible thing for a nation to be cursed by God. In promising to make of Abraham a great nation God included these words, I will **"curse him that curseth thee."** Let us not fool ourselves by saying that both the promise to bless and this promise to curse pertained only to the man, Abraham.

We rejoice that Jonah said, **"Salvation is of the LORD"** (Jonah 2:9). God is the source of it. It is not of man. It is not of the will of man (see John 1:13). Jonah did not like seeing God spare the Ninevites. He had anti-Ninevitism in his blood: the

Ninevites were enemies of Jonah's people, the Jews. Jonah wanted to see the city of Nineveh destroyed. But God spared Nineveh. There is another statement in the Bible about the source of salvation. The Lord Jesus Himself said, **"... Salvation is of the Jews"** (John 4:22). One commentator summed this statement up well saying that salvation is "...something that had been revealed, prepared, deposited with a particular people, and must be sought in connection with, and as issuing from them; and that people, 'the Jews,'" (JFB). Literally here the original says "...The salvation is out of the Jews." There is only one way of salvation and that is through the finished work of Jesus Christ, "a Jew."

What should be the attitude of every blood-bought child of God toward the Jews and their restored homeland government? We think God's Word tells us precisely what our view of them should be. Paul wrote, **"For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for**

the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance" (Rom. 11:24-29). Earlier in Romans 11:17-18 Paul set the stage writing, **"And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee."** While it pleased God to temporarily set aside His national people, Israel, and graft chosen Gentiles into the Jewish **"root"** we ought to **"boast not against the branches"** [Jews] that were cut off. Jews, in the main, Paul wrote are blind, but this blindness is **"in part"** and only **"until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in"** - it is a temporary blindness until the elect Gentiles shall all be saved. In another place Paul explains more about this Jewish blindness. He wrote: **"But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away"** (II Cor. 3:14-16). The Jews are still God's chosen national or earthly people. So far the hated Zionist government has been enabled by God, we think, to secure protection for her citizens. But when the Jews read the Bible there is a vail that keeps them from understanding in a spiritually profitable way what they read. But God sustains them for He is not finished with them. He has appointed their government and sustains them until the time that Christ shall return to the earth. Then the Scripture shall

be fulfilled: **"...Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen"** (Rev. 1:7). Most Bible students are agreed that the phrase, **"they also which pierced him"** is probably a reference to the Jews. For as we quoted Paul above, **"all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob."** **"When it [Israel] shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away."**

But in the interim: in the time between the time now past when God blinded the Jews until that blindness shall be taken away, what is the proper relationship between God's children and the Jews? Should God's people favor the Jews and their nation, Israel? Or, should God's children be anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist and actively work for the destruction of Israel? It is shocking that anyone professing to be a follower of God's Jewish Lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ, would dare to suggest that either anti-Semitism or anti-Zionist sentiments are proper and pleasing to God. But some dare! We think that the proper, Biblical, godly and God-pleasing attitude is that expressed by Paul when he wrote, as quoted above: **"As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes"** (Rom. 11:28). We who know that **"...they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham"** (Gal. 3:7) – being ourselves by faith the children of Abraham, having been grafted into the Jewish root – how can we hate and oppose the Jews and their state of Israel? With regard to the

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The Nation Israel-

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gospel - for our sakes (God's elect, saved Gentiles) God views them passively (Robertson) as enemies. Blinded to the gospel except for **"a remnant according to the election of grace"** (Rom. 11:5), the majority of Jews at present reject their Messiah. They oppose the gospel. And so we, too, must regard them passively as enemies: we are not actively their enemies, but they have made themselves our enemies by opposing the gospel we love and preach. But it is a completely different matter when we consider God's election of them. In this they are **"beloved for the fathers' sakes."** It was to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – the patriarchs or founding fathers of the Jewish nation – that God revealed Himself and made His grace known. It was to them that the promises were made. What shall we say of these beloved fathers? We can say nothing greater than God has already said: **"By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure. By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff"** (Heb. 11:17-21). These and others listed in Hebrews chapter eleven – the Hall of Fame of Faith – were all Jews. The Jews in existence today are the "children" of these men. About these Jews, along with others, God said:

"And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect" (Heb. 11:39-40). And you would have me turn against today's Jews who, like those in Paul's day remain **"beloved for the fathers' sakes?"** I cannot do it! They have made themselves enemies to the gospel, that is true, but they are nevertheless beloved. They may be the gospel's enemies, but God is not their enemy, nor should His children be enemies to the Jews. They are beloved enemies. That is what God says about them. Is that a paradox you can handle? In Deuteronomy 32:9-10 it is written: **"For the LORD'S portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye."** Shall the children of God ill treat God's national inheritance? Shall Christians array themselves against Zion and by doing so seek to oppose God and His plans for little Israel?

Paul, nearing the end of the record of his missionary activities, told of his efforts in a brief but full sentence. He said, **"Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ"** (Acts 20:21). Paul did not oppose either the Jews of his day or their government, corrupt though it was. Ought we not be busy preaching repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ to both Jew and Gentiles? We think a man cannot effectively preach the gospel to those whom he hates. He who hates the citizens of a nation will not long remain there

as a "missionary" among them nor will they regard him as genuine. He can preach to those who have made themselves his enemies, but only if he loves them. Let us keep things in Biblical perspective: whenever we think of the Jews, or their promised land, or their present situation including their problems with their neighbors, let us view them as beloved enemies – and let us do all we can to stand with them and aid them as God may give us opportunities.

And let us remember that we, too, were once beloved enemies. Romans 5:8-10 speaks of this: **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."** God chose to reconcile us **"when we were enemies,"** and did so, **"by the death of his Son."** In this way God exhibited or displayed His love for His elect people. And He loved us and reconciled us by Jesus' death when we were still enemies: beloved enemies. And so, in His time, God shall restore Israel because He loves them: they are beloved for the fathers' sakes.



When Gog Meets

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of Russia to a place of world prominence. Rising up from almost total destruction in World War II, she has become one of the principal competitors of the United States for world leadership. The United Soviet Socialist Republic of Russia has

as its goal the completion of the world revolution begun in November 7, 1917. She expects her master plan to communize the world to be successful between 1970 and 1980. The overthrow of the non-Communist world is to be accomplished through infiltration and minor wars.

Many Bible readers are asking will Russia rule the world? Is Russia mentioned in Bible prophecy? Will Russia fight a war in the Holy Land? To these questions I must reply that Russia has a very prominent place in Bible prophesy. Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39 tell the future of Russia in world affairs.

In Ezekiel 36 to 40 we have a panoramic view of the end time scenes. Chapter 37 is a prophecy of the restoration of the nation of Israel. This prophecy was fulfilled in the last generation. After two thousand years of dispersion of the Jews among the Gentile nations of the earth, the State of Israel emerged on May 14, 1948.

Chapters 38 to 39 reveal events which happen after the restoration of Israel to Palestine. So the prophecy in chapters 38 and 39 could not have been fulfilled before 1948. These two chapters tell of Russia's invasion of Palestine at the battle of Armageddon. Chapters 40 to 48 describe in great detail the rest of Israel in the land of Palestine and the reign of King Jesus on earth.

MAGOG IS RUSSIA

We are presently living in the time between the 37 and 38th chapters of Ezekiel. The 38 and 39th chapters predict a war between Israel and Russia. Two thousand and five hundred years ago the Spirit moved Ezekiel to utter a prophecy against Russia. At the time Ezekiel wrote the inhabitants of this northern

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country were roving tribes, living by thievery and warfare. These people had terrorized southwest Asia from the time of Ezekiel's birth. So he was familiar with these people then called Scythians. It is believed by some that the Babylonians sent the prophet to the land of the Scythians.

Ezekiel describes Gog as the king of the land of Magog. He wrote by divine inspiration in chapter 38, verses 1 to 4 these words: **"And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him, And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal; And I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords."**

One can readily see that the identity of Gog and the land of Magog are vital to understanding this passage. Since Gog is referred to as **"Thou," "Thee" "Him"** (Ezek. 38:16-17, 22) and is said to have hands (Ezek. 39:3), we can be sure he is a real person. Ezekiel 38:3 says that he is the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal. Hence Gog is the king of a northern confederacy of nations which will attack Israel when they are dwelling in security in the latter days prior to the second coming of Christ.

The word "Magog" is mentioned first in Genesis 10:2 as the second son of Japheth.

Since Ezekiel speaks of the land of Magog, he must be referring to the land where the descendants of Magog settled. Commenting upon Genesis 10:2 Josephus says: "Magog founded those that from him were named Magogites, but who are by the Greeks called Scythians" (ANTIQUITIES OF THE JEWS, p. 40). We know from history that the Scythians lived north of Israel and were scattered over the area that is now called Russia.

John Gill, writing in the mid 1700s, wrote in Ezekiel 38:2: "Gog is further described as the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal: some render it prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal; taking Rosh, as the rest, for the name of a place, a part of Scythia, from which the Russians came, and had their name" (GILL'S EXPOSITOR, Vol. VI, pp. 197-198).

James Bicheno, pastor of the Baptist Church in Hop Garden from 1811 to 1818, wrote about Gog and Magog: "Respecting Gog and his associates, mentioned by Ezekiel, it appears that Gog, or Magog, the son of Japheth, settled himself about Mount Caucasus, and is esteemed as the father of the Scythians, who dwelt on the east and north-east of the Euxine or Black Sea. Gomer and his son Togarmah peopled the northern track of the latter Asia; Meshech settled to the eastward of Gomer, in part of Cappadocia and Armenian, to the south and south-east of the Black Sea; Tubal settled still farther to the eastward, towards the Caspian Sea. These two latter were the near neighbors of Gog. From a colony of Tubal sprung the Russians; and the Muscovites own their origin to a colony of Meshech" (SIGNS OF THE LATTER DAYS, p. 103, 1794 edition).

He adds on page 104: "Thus

the Russians and Moscovites themselves appear to be included in the enumeration of Ezekiel, and we may observe that they have already extended their conquests into the neighborhood of the Black and Caspian Seas, and of those parts originally settled by Gog and their ancestor Tubal. The probability is, that they will extend their conquests still farther, and be distinguished instruments in the overthrow of the Turkish Empire. And having effected this, it is likely that, with the assistance of their newly acquired subjects or allies from the Caspian to the Propontus, with the Persians, & c. (The people enumerated by Ezekiel), they will both be the invading multitude marked out by the Spirit of Prophecy."

These two statements from two great Baptist scholars are sufficient to convince me that Gog is the ruler of modern Russia. But there is much modern scholarship to vindicate these two old Baptists. A footnote on Gog in the Scofield Reference Bible says on page 883: "That the primary reference is to the northern (European) powers, headed up by Russia, all agree." Halley's Bible Handbook, Fairbairne's Imperial Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Lange's Commentary, Unger's Bible Dictionary and the New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge all agree with this view.

Gensenius, the German-Hebrew scholar, in his unsurpassed lexicon states: "Rosh---proper name of a northern nation, mentioned with Tubal and Meshech, undoubtedly the Russians, who are mentioned by Byzantine writers of the tenth century, under the name of 'the Rhos' (In Greek), dwelling to the north of Taurus."

The American Standard Version gives the correct translation of

Ezekiel 38:2 where Gog is called **"The prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal."** The King James translators were wrong in making Rosh have the adjective meaning of chief. It is a proper noun. Rosh is probably the root of our modern word Russia. It is quite common for the consonants to remain the same and the vowels to be changed. If the vowel "o" is changed to "u" it becomes the root of our word, "Russia," with the suffix added.

"Meshech" is the ancient tribal name for Moscow. It is related to Moschi, a people who inhabited a portion of the land between the Black and Caspian Seas. These people were later called "Muscovites" from which came the name Moscow. "Tubal" is the tribal name from which the eastern capital of Russia, Tobolski, is derived.

RUSSIA NORTH OF PALESTINE

If one rejects these conclusions, he still must admit that Russia is in a geographical location north of Palestine. Ezekiel three times tells us according to the marginal rendering that these invading hordes come from **"the uttermost parts of the north"** (Ezek. 38:6, 15; 39:2). If you draw a straight line from Jerusalem to the North Pole, you will find that your line passes through the city of Moscow as both Moscow and Jerusalem are in the same meridian.

RUSSIA'S ALLIES

Ezekiel even names those nations who will form a confederacy with Gog in the invasion of Palestine. He says in verses 5 to 6: **"Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet; Gomer, and all his bands; the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands: and**

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many people with thee."

The list of Russia's allies starts with Persia. Much of what was once ancient Persia is modern Iran, for in 1935 the name of Persia was changed to Iran. The term Persia may also embrace modern Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq, all of which today are under the control of Russia. Events in Iran have received much attention in the last few months. Under the rule of the Shah, Iran was loyal to the United States. Now an Islamic-Marxist government has replaced the Shah. Khomeini has seized power with the support of the Soviet Union. These events are a prelude to a complete Russian takeover.

Ethiopia, a country in east Africa, comes next in the list. this is Cush, the first son of Ham (Gen. 10:6). His descendants settled in what is now modern Ethiopia and Sudan. This country is south of Egypt and is generally mentioned in connection with Egypt in the Old Testament (Ps. 68:31; Isa. 20:3-5; Ezek. 30:4-5; Dan. 11:43; Nah. 3:9). Modern Ethiopia has adopted Communism and allied herself with Russia. This has occurred after the United States donated her millions of dollars in foreign aid.

Libya comes next. This is Phut, the third son of Ham (Gen. 10:6). Some believe his descendants settled on the tract of land lying on the Mediterranean between Egypt and Carthage. Others believe it was in the same geographic region as Persia and Ethiopia, which lies south of Russia. David Cooper holds that Libya is Somaliland east and north of Ethiopia. John Gill says it is a country in Africa to the west of Egypt.

Next is Gomer. In Genesis 10:2-

3 Gomer is seen as the oldest son of Japheth, but later the name was applied to a tribe, probably the Cimmerians. Their land was sometimes called Gomeria, Gomerland and Germania. We know it to day by the name Germany. It is also well-known that East Germany is presently under Russian control.

Then there comes Togarmah. We learn from Genesis 10:3 that Togarmah was a son of Gomer. They were the Armenians. They settled north of Israel in what is modern Turkey. Modern Turkey borders on Russia and is on very good terms with the Russians.

In verse 6, the expression, **"many people with thee,"** points to the countries swallowed up by Russian conquest. In 1940 Russia took the Baltic republic of Latvia, then Lithuania, then Estonia, and forced Rumania to give Bessarabia. Then in 1945 she took part of Finland, then swallowed up Czechoslovakia, then Poland, East Prussia, and seized the Kureles Islands, and then the south half of Sakalin Island. In 1948 she made satellites of Rumania, followed by Hungary, Albania, Bulgaria, East Germany and North Korea. In more modern times Russia has spread her tentacles into Cuba, Angola, and Vietnam.

THE INVASION OF ISRAEL

The actual invasion of Palestine is described by Ezekiel in verses 8 to 12: **"After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste: but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them. They shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to**

cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee. Thus saith the Lord GOD; it shall also come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought: And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwallled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates. To take a spoil, and take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon their people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land."

INVASION AFTER ISRAEL IS REGATHERED

The situation existing when this invasion takes place is worthy of consideration. Verses 8 and 16 tell us that this invasion will occur in the "latter days." Verses 10, 11 and 14 reveal that Israel will be dwelling in safety in their ancient land. Again we see that this battle cannot be fought until Israel is in her land. She must not only be in her land, but dwelling safely in her land.

Then, too, I notice that the invasion is to occur after the rebuilding of cities without walls. In ancient times cities had walls around them for protection from the enemies. This practice was discontinued in our time since walls are not adequate protection against modern warfare. If you go to Israel today you will see cities without walls. Unwallled villages point to Israel's present situation.

I further see in verses 12 and 13 that Israel will have become a great nation of wealth. Russia comes to take silver and gold. Those familiar with the present economic growth of Israel know

that it has already become a nation of wealth. Israel has a tremendous oil reserve. The chemical value of the Dead Sea area is believed to be about three trillion dollars. These chemicals of the Dead Sea are urgently needed for modern industry and warfare. Israel has already established a plant at the south end of the Dead Sea and is reclaiming these chemicals and shipping them out.

The Middle East is a hub between three major continents--Europe, Asia and Africa. Therefore it is of tremendous strategic importance to a nation seeking to dominate the world like Russia.

ISRAEL'S ALLIES

Some of the other nations of the world will protest this invasion of Palestine. Ezekiel tells us in verse 13 of chapter 38: **"Sheba and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil?"**

Sheba and Dedan are Arabian nations which would include modern Saudi-Arabia and Yemen. Tarshish is the country which was settled by the descendants of Javan (Gen. 10:4). Some twenty times in the Scriptures you can read of the ships of Tarshish or merchants of Tarshish (II Chron. 9:21; 20:36; Ps. 48:7; Isa. 23:1,6,14). We know from the story of Jonah that Tarshish was across the waters of the Mediterranean from Palestine (Jon. 1:3), a distant place (Isa. 60:9). Some identify it with Tartessus in south Spain near Gibraltar. The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia says that "Tarshish was the farthest

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limit of the western world as known to the Hebrews" (Vol. 4, p. 2775). the reference is clearly to people living in the western world from Palestine.

Tarshish is connected with the young lions as if to imply that Tarshish is the old lion. This is doubtless a reference to the British Empire whose national symbol has been a lion as far back as we have a record. The young lions would be the nations which came out of the British Empire like Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the United States. Tarshish and the young lions are Ezekiel's description of those countries which would rise to power from the then known world west of the Holy Land.

Since America is one of the young lions under consideration, some interesting thoughts come to mind from the account in Ezekiel 38. First, I notice that America will stand with the nation of Israel in the close of the times of the Gentiles. Second, I see that England and the United States will not be under Russian domination at the end of the age. Thank God for this truth! America and England merely protest the invasion of Palestine. This fits perfectly with the modern policy of both these countries. There was a time when we would fight to protect freedom around the world, but it is no longer true. Under our detente policy we constantly protest but never are willing to fight. Fourth, it would seem from other Scriptures that America and England will finally join the battle in Palestine as all nations are to come against Jerusalem to the battle of Armageddon.

The stage is set for the invasion



of Palestine by the northern confederacy. The hours remaining of the times of the Gentiles are swiftly running out. The rapture of the saints could happen at any moment. Are you ready for the coming of Christ? Is your soul sheltered under the precious blood of Christ?

- PART II -

"Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord GOD; In that day when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shalt not know it? And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army: And thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days,

and I will bring thee against my land, that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes. Thus saith the Lord GOD; Art thou he of whom I have spoken in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days many years that I would bring thee against them?" (Ezek. 38:14-17).

In my previous message I showed how Ezekiel foretold of a Russian invasion of Palestine near the end of the times of the Gentiles. I identified her allies as Iran, Germany, Turkey and other nations swallowed up by Russian conquest. I also showed how this invasion would take place after Israel was regathered to her land and living in safety. I concluded by speaking about the nations of the Western World protesting against

this Russian invasion of Palestine.

Bible prophecy discloses in Daniel 11:40 that the King of Rome and his ten federated nations will join with Britain and the United States in the battle of Armageddon in defense of Palestine's right to exist free from Russian domination. It appears that the King of Rome will go to Palestine and put down the nation of Egypt, the king of the south. Then **"Tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him."** The east refers to the invasion of the Oriental hordes from China, Japan, India and other countries east of Palestine. The threat out of the north is Gog and his bands which are Russia and her allies. Thus all nations will be gathered against Jerusalem (Joel 3:1-17; Zech. 14:2; Rev. 16:14).

THE TIME OF THIS INVASION

It is evident that this battle is yet future from Ezekiel 38:39. The invasion is to occur after Israel is regathered in her ancient homeland. There are distinct references to **"the mountains of Israel"** (38:8; 39:2, 17) and Gog's grave is said to be **"in Israel"** (39:11). It is to come when Israel dwells safely in unwallled villages (38:8, 11). Ezekiel says it is to transpire in **"the latter days"** (38:16) and **"the latter years"** (38:8). This must be a reference to God's dealings with Israel in the seventieth week of Daniel's prophesy. It is connected with Israel's conversion at the second advent of Christ to the Mount of Olives.

Premillennialists are all agreed that this battle has not yet taken place, but they are not completely agreed as to the exact time it will occur. Some believe it will transpire before the rapture,

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others hold it will occur sometime in the tribulation period. Still others place it at the end of the Millennium. However the great majority believe it will happen during the tribulation, either at the beginning or near the close. I believe this battle will happen at the end of the tribulation period in connection with Armageddon.

I offer the following facts in support of my view: (1) A sword of the Lord is mentioned in both battles (Ezek. 38:21; Rev. 19:15, 21); (2) Both mention a great earthquake (Ezek. 38:19-20; Rev. 16:16-20); (3) Both mention a mighty hail (Ezek. 38:22; Rev. 16:21); (4) Both mention the fowls eating dead bodies (Ezek. 39:4, 17-20; Rev. 19:17-18); (5) Israel is converted following this great battle (Ezek. 7:25, 29; Zech. 13-14; Matt. 24:29-31). This last point settles the time of the battle since all agree that the conversion of Israel is at the second coming of Christ at the close of the tribulation.

The chief objection offered is that since Israel is to be dwelling safely in her land this cannot be the end of the tribulation, especially since Israel is being persecuted by the Antichrist during the Great Tribulation (Rev. 12:14-17). But it appears to me the Antichrist is persecuting the believing remnant of Israel. We must not assume there will be no Jews in Jerusalem during the period the sun-clothed woman is preserved in the wilderness (Rev. 12:14). Zechariah 13-14 speaks of Jews in Jerusalem at the battle of Armageddon who are converted by the sight of Christ returning in glory. Thus it is the unsaved Jews in Jerusalem which Gog attacks.

I believe this battle will happen

in connection with the battle of Armageddon at the end of the Great Tribulation. Israel is not at rest today with her neighbors though she has already been regathered to her ancient land. When the King of Rome emerges and revives the Roman Empire, he will make a covenant of protection and peace with the people of Israel (Dan. 9:27). Under this covenant Israel will be able to relax from their Gentile enemies and dwell safely. Russia will invade the land of Israel during this period.

Ezekiel's prophecy cannot be fulfilled until Israel is at rest. Presently Israel is an armed camp. Their state of unrest does not correspond to Ezekiel's prophecy. If Russia invaded Palestine today, it would not be the fulfillment of Ezekiel's words.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE INVADERS

Ezekiel tells us that these invaders will be destroyed by God's own power. **"Thus saith the Lord GOD; Art thou he of whom I have spoken in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days many years that I would bring thee against them? And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, that my fury shall come up in my face. For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel; So that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground."**

So God will send earthquakes, falling mountains and other disturbances to hinder the march of the northern invaders.

This is in harmony with John's description of Armageddon. **"And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found"** (Rev. 16:18-20).

He continues in verses 21 and 22: **"And I will call for a sword against him. . . with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone."** Notice how God will **"call for a sword against Gog."** Then compare John's revelation of the Second Coming of Christ in Revelation 19. He tells us in verse 15: **"And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations."** In verse 21 he also says: **"And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth."** In Revelation 16:21 John mentioned hail which is about 125 pounds of weight.

Taking into consideration all that Ezekiel says, it appears that God will first send an earthquake and falling mountains upon Gog and his allies. This will cause confusion and **"every man's sword shall be against his brother"** (Ezek. 38:21). Then there is



**Quotes
from
Brother
Ritechus
N.
Dignation**
by Joseph Harris

Truth is absolute, but some folks think it is made out of putty and can be changed into anything they want. When it comes to truth, you can accept it, reject it, ignore it, or despise it, but you can never change it.

"pestilence and blood" which may be a virus epidemic of bloody flux. This is followed by a great electric storm. Those surviving this will be slain with the sword of Christ and the armies of Heaven.

GOG'S GRAVEYARD

Gog and his forces will be slain by God before they have had a chance to use their weapons to any great degree. I read in Ezekiel 39:3-5 these words: **"And I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand, and will cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand. Thou shall fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee: and I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured. Thou shall fall upon the open field: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God."** This is the complete destruction of Gog and his allies. That one-sixth of the horde from the north will be left alive, as the King James Version in Ezekiel 39:2 teaches, is a mistaken translation.

THE FOWLS EAT THE FOOLS

The mighty army of the north probably consisting of many millions will become bird food. Ezekiel tells us: **"And, thou son of**

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man, thus saith the Lord GOD; speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood. Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan. And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken, of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you. Thus ye shall be filled of my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord God" (Ezek. 39:17-20). John tells us in Revelation 19 that this will happen at the Second Coming of Christ (Rev. 19:17-18).

So great will be the slaughter that blood will flow 200 miles long to the depth of a horse's bridle (Rev. 14:20). According to Ezekiel 39:12 it will take seven months to bury the dead. The Israelites will burn the weapons of war as fire wood for seven years (Ezek. 39:9).

GOD HAS DECREED

RUSSIA'S DESTRUCTION

The Lord Himself brings Russia to this slaughter. There are three definite statements, **"I will bring thee against them"** (Ezek. 38:16,4,17). In this I see God exercising His sovereignty. No power on earth can prevent God's future destruction of Gog.

While the destruction of Russia is foreordained, Russia is still responsible for her conduct. She is said to decide to invade Palestine. The Bible distinctly says that Russia will say: **"I will go up to**

the land of unwallled villages; I will go to them that are at rest" (Ezek. 38:11). Here we see the harmony between God's plan and man's responsibility.

WHY GOD IS AGAINST GOG

The Scythians, the progenitors of the modern Russians, were a nomadic people of a bloodthirsty disposition. They sacrificed one out of every hundred of their prisoners of war to their god. They drank the blood of their enemies and made vases of their skulls and dollies of their scalps. No wonder even in the days of Ezekiel God said: **"I am against thee, O Gog."** God's attitude has not changed in the days of the modern godless Russians. God is still against Russia and has foreordained her doom.

First, God is against Gog because Gog is against God. A Red conspirator said some years ago: "Brethren, I come to announce unto you a New Gospel, which must penetrate unto the very ends of the world. . .the old world must be destroyed and replaced by a new one. . .the lie must be stamped out and give way to truth. . .the first lie is God, the second lie is right. . .and when you have freed your minds from the fear of a God and from that childish respect for the fiction of right, then all the remaining chains that bind you, and which are called science, civilization, property, marriage, mortality and justice, will snap asunder like threads. . .Let your own happiness be your only law."

Such statements reveal the godless program of Russia. It is alarming to see how these Russian ideologies have crept into the minds of some young Americans. Modern Russians scoff at Heaven as the "promise of pie in the sky." They promise pie on earth,

an earthly utopia in place of a heavenly home. This is why God is against Gog.

The second reason God is against Russia is because she is against the Jews. God promised the first Hebrew: **"I will. . .curse him that curseth thee"** (Gen. 12:3). Historically and traditionally Russia has been anti-Semitic. The Bolsheviks promised the Jews racial equality to secure their cooperation in overthrowing the Czar in 1920. Once Stalin came into power he began to liquidate the Jews from the Communist party. Leon Trotsky, Jewish partner of Lenin in leading the Revolution, was murdered. Other Jews were marked for extermination and officially labeled "Trotskyities." The psalmist uttered this prophecy centuries ago: **"Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech"** (Ps. 120:5).

In Russia Jews are not counted as human beings, not to mention citizens. They are looked upon as undesirable aliens and nonentities. The stage is being set for Russia's invasion of Palestine. The conquest of the Holy Land will be the culmination of all Russian anti-Semitism.

PROBLEMS CONSIDERED

The reference to the antiquated weapons like the bow and arrow in Ezekiel's words disturb some. They cannot bring themselves to believe that horses are used in modern warfare. But these words are not symbolic, for all prophecy must have a literal fulfillment. I do not concur with the idea that Ezekiel described the weapons of his day only to show the army will be fully equipped for battle. These weapons are just what Ezekiel says because the Bible declares they will be burned (Ezek. 39:9). It would be very difficult to burn a symbol.

I believe the nations will sign a disarmament treaty like many world leaders are already talking about. Since the production of tanks and guns could be easily detected, Russia will gather many horses and resort to primitive weapons made in secret. This will make the invasion of Palestine a surprise attack. Ezekiel's very words support this. **"Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land; thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee"** (Ezek. 38:9). This would allow a complete literal fulfillment which prophecy demands.

It is also interesting to note that a large portion of all the horses in the world are in Russia. And before someone declares that horses are not used in modern warfare, let him recall that five thousand mounted cavalryman appeared in North Korea south of the Yalu River in December 1950 and put the American Marines to flight. In Revelation 19 John tells us Christ will come from Heaven upon **"A white horse"** (Rev. 19:11). Then he mentions that **"the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses"** (Rev. 19:14). It is also significant that John describes the depth of human blood as being **"unto the horse bridles"** (Rev. 14:20).

CONCLUSION

Moscow is becoming emboldened in its drive for world domination. They realize that public sentiment plus congressional restrictions have eliminated the possibility of U. S. troops being dispatched overseas to contest Communist aggression. Russia and her client states are having a field day in Africa and the Mid-east. America's allies around the world have serious doubts

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about the ability of the United States to defend the free world against the rapidly mounting Soviet challenge.

It would seem from Ezekiel's prophecy that Russia will be a greater world power near the end of the age than America. But Russia will never completely dominate the world. Instead, she is headed for a shameful defeat at the hands of Almighty God. Her defeat will not come from Europe or America, but from Heaven.

While the Bible does not tell us all that the future holds for this country, it does make it clear there will never be a Russian dominated world empire. The invasion of Palestine by Russia fits into our contemporary scene. This strongly indicates the times of the Gentiles are fast running out and that the nations are preparing for the final crisis. If there ever was a people who had a right to look forward to the coming of the Lord momentarily day by day, on the basis of what is around them, it is us! **"Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord"** (James 5:7).



What Is Conversion?

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from the least of God's saints. In conversion, the proud intellect is humbled, the hard heart is melted, and the stubborn sinner is changed into another man. He hates what he formerly loved--and loves what he formerly hated. He views everything differently: the Bible is a new book; he sees the ways of God with new eyes; he wonders at himself and--at all around him.

He once could not tell what was

meant by the new birth before--but he knows now. He once could see no beauty in Jesus before--but He is the "altogether lovely One" now. He could not enjoy prayer or praise before--but he can enjoy them now. "All things have become new." No book like the Bible now; no day like Sunday now; no place like the house of God; no people like the saints; no subject like the love of Christ; no service like the service of God; no pleasure like that which flows from fellowship with God.

Conversion includes conviction of sin, embracing the Savior, and walking according to the perceptive will of God.

Reader, are YOU converted? The Lord Jesus has Himself said, "I assure you--unless you are converted and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:3).

There must be a change of heart, and a change of life--or there is no salvation. You must be born again by the Spirit of God--or perish. You must be purified by the Word of God, justified by the obedience of Christ, and sanctified by the Holy Spirit--or you have neither title to, nor fitness for Heaven.

Let no man deceive you--God's Word is plain and positive upon the point! Do not deceive yourself--lest you should be undeceived in the burning lake of fire and brimstone! As the tree falls--so it must lie! And it always falls--the way towards which it leans! If your thoughts, desires, hopes, and affections lean towards Heaven, and towards God--all will be well; but if not, it will be ill with you, and misery with you forever. Examine yourself carefully, for your everlasting welfare is at stake! Better be deceived on any other point--than on this point. Be this your prayer, "Search me,

O God--and conform me to the image of your Son."

It is to be feared that very many professors are not really converted to God. They have changed their opinions, they have professed religion, they have joined a church; but God has not changed their hearts! They are still carnal and worldly! Moral they may be--spiritual they are not. Pray they may--but fellowship with God in prayer, they have not. They are numbered with the saints--but they are not saved by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit. They talk of grace--but they do not experience its power. They allow themselves to be deceived--and imagine that all is well, though they have never passed from death unto life, or been born of the Spirit of God.

Reader, take heed lest you should be deceived. Nothing is easier in these days. It is respectable to profess religion, to be a member of a church, and attend the ministry of a popular preacher. But real Christianity is something far beyond this! It is vital union to Christ. It is possessing the Spirit of Christ. It is being separated from the sinful world. It is crucifying the flesh, with its affections and lusts. It is mortifying the old man with his deeds. It is being risen with Christ, by the faith of the operation of God; and as such, setting the affections on things above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God. It is visiting the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and keeping ourselves unspotted from the world.

Let me beseech you as a friend, not to stop short of these things. Seek to have a thorough work of the Holy Spirit in the heart. Make sure work for eternity. Dig deep, and lay your foundation on the rock. Strive to enter in at the strait

gate. Count all things but loss, that you may win Christ. Aim high, be an uncommon Christian that you may be able to say with Paul, **"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me"** (Gal. 2:20). Spirit of the living God, create us anew in Christ Jesus unto good works, and bear your witness with our spirits that we are born of God!



Faithful Christians

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government is GOOD. We should be supportive of our government! However, when our government sins and draws attention to anything but God, then we should pray that God will save the leaders (if monarchy), or save the voters (democracy), so that the government will honor God once again (or for the first time- in some ages and countries).

God instituted the family. So are there any unsaved families that should not be required to be faithful? Do we absolve them from their God-given responsibility, just because they do not claim (or have any desire to be) Christian? No, the pattern is good and perfect. Man can pollute (adultery) and distort (gay marriage), but that does not mean things can not be made right again by the blood of Christ! So, too, with government- God instituted it, and it is fundamentally good and perfect. It just needs prayer and grace.

Be a patriotic Filipino! Pray that your country will be godly. Be a patriotic Chinese citizen! Pray that God will rescue your people

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Faithful Christians

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from the current government! And be a patriotic American! Pray that God will send a Jonah or Moses to turn us and deliver us back to our God! **"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land"** (II Chron. 7:14). That is our first responsibility! Other lands will follow, as we are allowed to be benevolent toward them (Israel, etc), but we must first start at home...patriotism. **"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth"** (Acts 1:8).

I have a couple of quotes from one of the greatest patriots of all time. As a little background, the nation he was a patriot unto, that he was zealous for, had a government that had denied Jesus Christ and persecuted those that took the name Christian. It was a generation so wicked and God-denying that they would crucify the Son of God. Yet the Apostle Paul, being the patriot that he was, prayed for his beloved country, **"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God"** (Rom. 10:1-3).

Another verse is Romans 9:1-4,

"I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: Who are Israelites."

The Apostle Paul is here praying for the salvation of lost souls! But he has a specific interest in HIS OWN PEOPLE! A patriot, if ever one was! He has great desire in his heart for Israelies in particular as versus the rest of the world! That said, the Apostle Paul certainly could never be accused of bigotry, could he? He went to other countries and preached the gospel to Greeks, Barbarians, Sythians, etc., but he loved his own country and countrymen so much that he said he would give his life for their salvation!

Another (of many) patriotic and Biblical quotes, from the Apostle Peter this time, **"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God"** (I Peter 4:17)? Revival is the source and the outpouring (both) of true patriotism. We should desire that the Lord bless US (the United States), so that we might bless THEM (the rest of the world). Yes, we need more boldness! We need more patriotism. Let us not be ashamed to be like Peter and Paul! Let us be patriots! We can not be faithful Christians unless we are.

If "modern patriotism" differs from this, then shame on us! This is what I would term as true patriotism. Praying for God's intervention for ME and US.

I think maybe two terms that might be confused here are

"patriotism" and "nationalism." The "modern patriotism" seen in many countries and on television screens across the world is more along the lines of "nationalism" rather than what is true "patriotism." People claim to love their country, but are essentially destroying it with their ignorance of God and godliness. Nationalism is a love for a political, social or cultural collection of people. Folks in this category would be called Christian Americans, where American is the "noun" and Christian is the "adjective" that describes that "noun." Primarily an American, but only secondarily a Christian. A true patriot would be an American Christian, where God is first! Then properly, the Christian is the "noun," while American is the "adjective" that describes the noun-Christian.

A real necessity for patriotism is to recognize that God is good and only God is good! **"And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments"** (Matt. 19:17). If we get confused and think that some men are good enough or clever enough to base our laws upon, we will get that country in trouble real quick. Only God and God-followers know what is really best for any political, social or cultural collection of people.

Flat out, I really do not think ANY modern "liberal" could ever be considered a patriot. They simply just do not have ANY recognition of what is 'good' for their country. Note what the Bible has to say about so-called liberals and their destructive policies, **"The vile person shall be no more called liberal, nor the churl said to be bountiful. For the vile person will speak villany, and his heart will work**

iniquity, to practise hypocrisy, and to utter error against the LORD, to make empty the soul of the hungry, and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail. The instruments also of the churl are evil: he deviseth wicked devices to destroy the poor with lying words, even when the needy speaketh right. But the liberal deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he stand" (Isa. 32:5-8).

Go with the prophet Isaiah thru the traits on those that call themselves modern liberals. (Mostly you will be thinking of the Democratic Party in the USA!) 1) *They will speak villany.* No more vicious words will you hear than come out of the liberal left. They will revert to name-calling and mud-slinging as quick as the hat drops. 2) *His heart will work iniquity.* No soundness in their doctrines and policies, but just selfish motives and ideological rhetoric without a moral compass. 3) *They will practice hypocrisy.* Back-stabbing, two-faced liars is what the Democratic Party is full of. They will tell the gullible public what they want to hear, never intending to keep any of their frivolous promises. If you thought Satan twisted God's Word in the Garden of Eden, you ought to listen to the modern liberal today. Abortion and rape are both wrong for the same reasons: They are both violent acts of aggression on other people's bodies. And yet they endorse the one and claim to hate the other. 4) *Utter error against the LORD.* Anyone that attended (or watched on TV) the 2012 Democratic National Convention knows that a majority of their party wants NOTHING to do with the LORD. 5) *Make empty the soul of the hungry.* We have lost

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. When was Hell created?

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Since Hell is beneath the surface of the earth (Amos 9:2) it would technically be part of the earth. The first inhabitants of Hell were reprobate angels (II Pet. 2:4). Genesis 1:1 states: **"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."** Creation scientists estimate the earth is somewhere between 7000 to 10,000 years old. Hell was created in conjunction with the creation of the earth so I will venture to say it was created by God as a holding place of punishment for the wicked some 7000 to 10,000 years ago. Hell and its inhabitants will be cast into the Lake of Fire after the Millennial Reign of Christ in conjunction with the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:10-15).

TOM ROSS

God moved upon the face of the waters" (Gen. 1:1-2).

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made" (John 1:1-3).

The above verses state that **"In the beginning God created"**, then in John 1:1-2 that **"The Word"** (Jesus Christ) **"made all things and without Him nothing was made that was made."**

We could make this answer very long by asking does the questioner mean Sheol O.T. (Hades N.T.) or the **"Lake of Fire"** (Gehenna)? But to answer the question, I have never read any Scripture that tells us when Hell specifically was made. For me it is not so important when it was made but who are the ones going there!

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41).

If the questioner is referring to the **"Lake of Fire"** the above Scripture tells us it is a real place, as does (Revelation 19:20; 20:10; 20:14-15). I would have to believe then that when Hell the **"Lake of Fire"** (Gehenna) was created, would have been when **"The Word"** (Jesus Christ) **"made all things and without Him nothing was made that was made" (John 1:1-2).** God Bless!

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Hell is an English translation of several descriptive Hebrew and Greek words that simply make reference to death and the grave. The Biblical definition makes Hell to be the final destination and eternal dwelling place of the non-elect, or simply put, every soul that never experienced the grace and blood atonement of Jesus Christ. Selah! Think about it!

Searching for its origin, Jude 1:6 makes reference to Hell's earliest inhabitants: **"And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day."** As we compare the later arrivals, we see this is the same terrible place. Revelation 19:20/20:14-15, **"And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet...These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. ...And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."**

So, when was Hell created? This is actually a very important question of which to have the answer. We must know beyond a shadow of a doubt that Hell is NOT a "Plan B!" God did NOT see rebellious Lucifer and Cain and wonder what He was going to do with them now! Hell was already prepared for them: **"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from**

me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41). Hell is ultimately as eternal as Heaven is. Both are "prepared" for their incoming residents by an omniscient God. It was not necessary for Hell to have inhabitants for it to be created any more than Niagara Falls or the Grand Canyon need to have spectators to be glorious! When the first explorers came to the crest of either of these awesome scenes, they already existed! So, too, was there a time when Hell was empty and a day when it received its first eternally cursed inhabitant. Selah! Think about it!

Hell was probably created in that infinitely wondrous verse way back in Genesis 1:1, where God majestically and succinctly states: **"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."** Certainly, Hell was already eternally existent in the mind of God, no matter when the actual creative act took place in chronological time. God is not bound by that chronology, but is infinite in time as well as space. Selah! Think about it!

Before the foundation of the world, all of God's decrees were already known unto the eternal, unchanging Almighty. **"And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8).** Two points to note from this powerful verse:

1) Christ was slain from the foundation of the world. Truly, this shows the preemptive deity of God in sovereignty, **"Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I**

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"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

2. Is there any truth to global warming in light of Scripture i.e. II Peter 3:10?

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As far as I am concerned there is NO truth to global warming in light of II Peter 3:10, or any other Scripture.

Global warming is a concoction made up by a small group of scientists, Al Gore, and his cronies, to put an undue strain on our economy and the American people. There Is No Global Warming!

I was sent an email the other day and I listened to Pat Robinson, whom I have no respect for; or do I share in any of his liberal thinking. As I listened, he stated that the earth is more than 6 thousand years old and that he does not understand why Christians can not see this. And he disagrees with creationist Ken Ham on the subject. So now we have a so called Christian Evangelist refuting the earth being 6,000 years old. I have a word for a person like this, and just recently the BBB printed the article I wrote concerning what an idiot was. I could use the Bible term here as well, **"infidel,"** which means an unlearned person. You can find that interview with Pat Robinson here: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/11/28/pat-robertson-creationism-earth-is-not-6000-years-old_n_2207275.html

So, one could see the danger of

Christians who start believing in global warming. We will not take the time to deliberate global warming but will give an account of what II Peter 3:10 does refer too.

II Peter 3:10, **"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."**

This verse clearly teaches that it is not just the earth that will be burned up or be melted with fervent heat, but the heavens (not Heaven) and elements will be burned as well. So much for global warming, unless you believe the stars are affected as well. Not the third Heaven where the angels and the glory of God, and Christ sitting on His right side are, and where Paul was taken up into the third Heaven, **"I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven"** (II Cor. 12:2), but the heavens where the stars are arrayed, and the airy heavens where the birds fly.

Without being lengthy, this is judgment (the Day of the Lord) upon the heavens (previously described). The elements and this old earth will be purged by fire, and all that was once sinful will be wiped clean. I am sure not all believe this, but the earth will be renewed and be like God intended it before the fall, and

this will be our dwelling place once again except all evil, sin, and corruption will be gone. After all this that is done, according to Peter, God's elect will reside here on the new earth, not in Heaven, **"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband"** (Rev. 21:1-20). Please read the rest of chapter 21. God Bless!

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The question has no correlation to the Scripture reference except as dry wit. But, it is my kind of humor, so I do find it intriguing! **"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up"** (II Pet. 3:10). Certainly God will cause a massive "global warming" at the end of the Millennial Reign and the White Throne Judgment as God "reforges" the earth and her atmosphere (heavens). Selah! Think about it!

We may joke about it, but global warming is a serious topic of our times and we must realize that some (even Christians) have fallen for **"science falsely so called"** (I Tim. 6:20) in perpetrating this hysteria. To state it bluntly,

there is absolutely no truth to global warming, as preached from the leftist media pulpit of this nation/age. Sure, the globe warms and cools in cycles, but that is a promise of God! **"And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD...And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart...While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease"** (Gen. 8:20-22). From as short a cycle as day and night, to seasonal/yearly cycles to cycles that measure in the decades or centuries, we can for a 'season' expect cooling to follow warming, EVERY TIME!

In the 1970's, I remember the allegation was global cooling! I have taken the following quote from the world-wide web: "Significant changes in climate have continually occurred throughout geologic time. For instance, the Medieval Warm Period, from around 1000 to 1200 AD (when the Vikings farmed on Greenland) was followed by a period known as the Little Ice Age. Since the end of the 17th Century the "average global temperature" has been rising at the low steady rate mentioned above; although from 1940 – 1970 temperatures actually dropped, leading to a Global Cooling scare" (source: globalwarminghysteria.com).

The more one studies the matter, the more "Global Warming" falls into the creed and faith of the Humanist religion, of which evolution is their chief doctrine and tenet. Their backward science that determines whether FACTS are acceptable or not by their ideology, rather than to mold their theories after observed facts and validated laws is up to its old tricks here, as well.

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Forum #1

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will do all my pleasure" (Isa. 46:10). We can humanly say that "it was as good as done," but that falls miserably short of the import of this revelation of the eternality of **"..the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."** Not figuratively, but literally, this was already accomplished! It only had yet to be revealed to us! **"But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me"** (Gal. 1:15-16). God's work was already accomplished; it had only to be manifest in OUR time to US.

2) Secondly, this verse says that names are written in the Book of Life. And some are not. Positively, those that ARE recorded in this manifesto of life are souls like Adam and Eve that have been purchased by the blood of this Lamb of God! Shed blood from that definitive, time-encompassing death on Calvary's cross! Carefully penned from that precious blood before the foundation of the world! Rescuing them from... a likewise eternal Hell. "As good as done." Hell must already exist, for there to be a genuine salvation; for there to be a genuine sacrifice in the halls of eternity past, because Hell is what Christ suffered on the cross for me. Selah! Think about it!

As difficult as it may be for humanity to understand, Hell has a position of honor in Creation. God is not ashamed of Hell! Rather it, like all of His creation, brings glory, honor, and understanding to His almighty Person. And as Isaiah 66:22-24 reveals, when the heavens and earth are made anew, it will be the same, ancient Hell, that will

outlast the reforging of the residue of God's creation: **"For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD. And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh."**

Three reasons why God will, on regular occasions, take all the Saints of glory throughout the eons of eternity future to this awful window into the depths of Hell.

1. Only Hell can bring an understanding of His unwavering justice, His virtuous wrath, His enduring hatred of sin, His purity, and His necessary separation from sin, unto sanctified holiness. Try to preach ANY of these doctrines without a Hell and they will result in a God of hollow nothingness.

2. Only Hell can distinguish our sovereign God with the honor He deserves! Hell shows forth the unqualified uprightness and plenary righteousness of our singular God! He must not, and cannot, be contaminated with the iniquity and wickedness contained in that dreadful place.

3. Only Hell can cascade our merciful God with the glory He deserves! The glorious beauty of sovereign grace in saving unworthy souls by the endurance of Jesus Christ, the Son of God through the impossible torment and endless tortures of this divinely, omnipotent, terrible place called Hell. How much did He love us? He went to Hell

and back for us. Heaven cannot show what an awesome price our redemption cost our merciful Saviour- but Hell indeed was created for that purpose. Selah! Think about it!

MATTHEW STEPP



Forum #2

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Since they (somehow?)KNOW (intuitively?) that there has been an Ice Age, they must have violent climate swings to accommodate such an assumption. Irregardless of the FACTS that we have a relatively static and healthy climate, they must find some unrealistic phenomenon to explain the drastic effects that the Great Flood of Noah's day caused upon the Earth. Too much evidence of the flood remains to deny, so these man-made theories are put forward, one by one, only to be shot down by facts, time after time.

"..There is no proof that CO₂ is the main driver of global warming. As measured in ice cores dated over many thousands of years, CO₂ levels move up and down AFTER the temperature has done so, and thus are the RESULT OF, NOT THE CAUSE of warming. Geological fieldwork in recent sediments confirms this causal relationship. There is solid evidence that, as temperatures move up and down naturally and cyclically through solar radiation, orbital and galactic influences, the warming surface layers of the earth's oceans expel more CO₂ as a result" (ibid).

The promise God gave Noah's family back in Genesis 8 is one that we can trust in. The only times we will have extreme global warming is at the hand of God. And that will not be until the

time of the Great Tribulation, after we are raptured out. **"And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory"** (Rev. 16:8-9). Also an evidence of global cooling: **"And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise"** (Rev. 8:12).

We might see more extreme variations in climate as the world accelerates toward the end times. Christ prophesied of a proliferation of famines, pestilences and earthquakes in more diverse places as signs #3-5 of the ten signs of the coming end of the world. **"...and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places"** (Matt. 24:7). But that is in God's hands! Until then? No global warming. Selah! Think about it!

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I love the sarcasm of the question! Yes, when the Purgation of the Universe is performed by God, the elements shall burn with a fervent heat to purge out every defiling influence from the heavens and the earth. It will

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Forum #2

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mark the ultimate and final end of global warming. The result of this purging of the universe is recorded in Revelation 21:1: **"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea."**

Much is made in our day of global warming/cooling/climate change. God has always been in control of His Creation and has changed the climate cycles to fit His own sovereign purpose. It is the height of atheistic folly to think that puny, impotent, sinful, finite man could somehow control the environment. I believe all the drama surrounding climate change is an effort by socialists, communists, and atheists to try and dethrone God under the guise of a pseudo-scientific scam.

TOM ROSS



Faithful Christians

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a whole generation of children to our welfare system. They have no desire to fish (work) anymore; they just want the golden platter of welfare handed to them. No self-reliance or self-sufficiency remains. 6) *Cause drink of thirsty to fail.* Failed policies of socialism that can never succeed in any generation as history clearly shows to any that would learn from her mistakes and failures. 7) *Destroy the poor with lying words.* All politicians are bad, but there simply is no conscience among the liberal left. Never truer words have been spoken concerning the direction of this country politically, than what God inspired Isaiah to write concerning the vile liberals and

churls of our age and time.

The last verse reveals that true-hearted liberals are really the conservative patriots. Love, compassion, justice, and pure hearts are their tools of righteousness. I thank God that there are a handful of them left. But they have little power in the physical realm. I am truly concerned that America may have gone too far from the precepts of God's Word held onto by our founding fathers. When Judah had strayed too far, God commanded Jeremiah to discontinue his prayers for them, **"Thus saith the LORD unto this people, Thus have they loved to wander, they have not refrained their feet, therefore the LORD doth not accept them; he will now remember their iniquity, and visit their sins. Then said the LORD unto me, Pray not for this people for their good. When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and an oblation, I will not accept them: but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence"** (Jer. 14:10-12). Our only hope is to trust in Jesus Christ and seek His face, through humility and repentance. May God bless America with faith and repentance!

It remains to be seen whether we are SUCCEEDING at being patriotic or not. We certainly have a HUGE task ahead of us. The question was: Can we be faithful Christians without being patriotic? And my answer to that one was, No. We need to be more like the Apostle Paul, to have a true love for our country and countrymen and the BOLDNESS to stand and proclaim the need of God more and more. We need to head up to Mars' Hill and sweep away the foolish superstitions

of the atheists, evolutionists and modernists! **"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness. . ."** (Acts 17:30-31).

May the LORD help us not to lose faith, but to always be patriots,

never Tories. Certainly we have a current oppressive government, but patriots have faced steeper odds before and have seen that their God can be both merciful and gracious. 1776, anyone? May God bless America with repentance from her sins and give her faith in the Lord Jesus Christ!



THE

BIBLE AND OTHER NEWSPAPER

Readers of the BBB are urged to submit religious news items which they may read in their local paper or some other publication. In sending these please give the name of the publication as well as the date it was printed. We will not be able to print all which are submitted, but we welcome any item you may feel we should read.

Send them to The Berea Baptist Banner, PO Box 39, Mantachie, MS 38855-0039.

UN CALLS CATHOLIC PRO-LIFE STANCE TORTURE

(WNS)--In a novel attack on pro-life groups and nations, the United Nations has accused the Roman Catholic Church of torture for advocating against abortion. Austin Ruse, president of the Catholic Family and Human Rights Institute (C-FAM), said Western powers for years have tried to use the UN to force a liberal social agenda on conservative nations. The Vatican has signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention Against Torture. During reports to those committees in the last 90 days, the UN tried to further press the Vatican to change its teaching.

COMPELLED SPEECH?

(WNS)--The WNBA has become the first professional sports league actively to promote the LGBT lifestyle. Some teams have had their own events for years, including booths at gay pride parades. League research has found that a quarter of self-described lesbians watch games on TV or in the stands. But this new league-wide initiative,

announced May 21, says it is "celebrating inclusion and equality, while combating anti-LGBT bias." The wide-reaching objective includes a nationally televised "WNBA Pride" game June 22 on ESPN2, and players throughout the league will have to wear LGBT-promoting gear during certain June games. Franchises will also have "team participation" in LGBT Pride parades and festivals. How and if Christian athletes will be compelled to participate is not clear. League officials have not returned calls and emails.

BREAKING DOWN THE GOVERNMENT'S ROLE IN MARRIAGE

(WNS)--The 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals heard arguments for and against the ban on same-sex marriage in Virginia, which a federal judge found unconstitutional. Legal heavy hitters again represented the gay couples who sued in Virginia for the right to marry. Ted Olson and David Boies are the same legal team who argued against California's Proposition 8 before the U.S.

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Bible & the Newspaper

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Supreme Court last year. The three judges hearing the Virginia case were quite pointed with their questions, ranging from states' rights to the history and tradition of the family unit. Judge Roger Gregory, appointed by President Barack Obama, was particularly critical of mom-and-dad-defined marriages, equating them to a totalitarian system. Gregory acted outraged when David Oakley, the lawyer defending a Virginia court clerk and the majority of Virginia voters, said the government had a legitimate interest in protecting children through the marriages of their biological parents.

AFTER AN EASY COURT WIN, GAY MARRIAGES BEGIN IN OREGON

(WNS)--U.S. District Judge Michael McShane in May declared Oregon's ban on same-sex marriage unconstitutional. At least one county office immediately started issuing marriage licenses to gay couples who were waiting to wed. Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum in February joined the list of state attorneys general who refused to defend their states' marriage amendments in court. The National Organization for Marriage (NOM) petitioned the court to take up the defense on behalf of Oregonians, but was denied. This morning, NOM appealed that decision to the U.S. Court of Appeals, also asking judges for a pre-emptive stay against McShane's ruling, which NOM anticipated would go in favor of gay marriage. The appeals court rejected NOM's plea.

PENNSYLVANIA GOVERNOR WILL NOT APPEAL GAY MARRIAGE RULING

(WNS)--Pennsylvania's Republican governor announced

today he will not appeal yesterday's ruling that struck down the state's voter-approved ban on same-sex marriage. Gov. Tom Corbett's office mounted a defense to the legal challenge against the law after the state's Democratic attorney general, Kathleen Kane, refused to do it. Conservatives expected Corbett to appeal the ruling, but he said today an appeal would be "extremely unlikely to succeed." Even so, he said dropping the case went against his beliefs. "As a Roman Catholic, the traditional teaching of my faith has not wavered," Corbett said in a statement. "I continue to maintain the belief that marriage is between one man and one woman." Unless a higher court intervenes, same-sex marriages can begin immediately.

INTRODUCING THE "MODERN" CALIFORNIA FAMILY

(WNS)--California lawmakers are preparing to "modernize" the family. A new bill allows gay fathers and mothers to choose whether they want to identify themselves as "father," "mother," or just "parent" on a child's birth certificate. The bill is currently on its way to the state Senate. "The definition of a family needs to be more flexible, and same-sex parents should not be discriminated against when filling out a birth certificate," Assemblyman Jimmy Gomez, a Democrat and the bill's sponsor, said in a press release. But this move towards "flexibility" likely will mean more confusion and instability, said Brad Dacus, president of the Pacific Justice Institute and an attorney who defends parental rights and religious liberties. "It creates greater confusion with regards to the identity to a mother and a father and the role that they play," he said. "Studies show that children need stability and an action of men recording themselves mothers or two mothers or women recording themselves as a father or

two fathers creates confusion as to what is a mother what is a father."

OBAMA ADMINISTRATION ORDERS MEDICARE TO PAY FOR SEX CHANGE SURGERY

(WNS)--Taxpayer dollars could soon pay for sex reassignment surgeries for elderly or disabled Americans on Medicare, thanks to a May ruling from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The agency's Departmental Appeals Board lifted a three-decade-old ban on using Medicare funds for transsexual surgeries. The decision means the government considers the surgeries medically necessary and effective treatment for some individuals who do not identify with their biological sex. The policy reversal came in response to a request from 74-year-old Army veteran Denee Mallon to have Medicare pay for genital reconstruction. Mallon, from Albuquerque, N. M., was born a man but has been diagnosed with "gender dysphoria," a state of distress about one's biological gender. Medicare denied Mallon's request for surgery two years ago, but the appeals board overturned that decision.

HOUSTON TRAMPLES RELIGIOUS LIBERTY WITH NEW ANTI-BIAS POLICY

(WNS)--In what some are calling a sham proceeding, Houston leaders in May approved an Equal Rights Ordinance that adds the LGBT community to the city's nondiscrimination laws. Supporters claim it provides necessary protections for the city's lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered residents. But religious liberty experts warn it could be used to force churches, colleges, and Christian-owned businesses to act against their Biblical beliefs about sexuality. The ordinance, which takes effect in 30 days, passed the

Houston City Council 11-6, and local television news broadcast the LGBT supporters' jubilation. Reports said fewer than 30 people out of more than 200 in attendance spoke against the measure, but they failed to mention that more than 150 pastors and pro-family advocates felt so disrespected by the proceedings that they staged a walkout early in the meeting.

COLORADO BAKER ORDERED TO MAKE SAME- SEX WEDDING CAKES

(WNS)--Colorado's Civil Rights Commission ordered a Christian baker to make wedding cakes for same-sex couples, ruling his religious objections did not trump the state's anti-discrimination statutes. The unanimous ruling from the seven-member commission upheld an administrative law judge's decision in December that Jack Phillips violated the state's civil rights law when he refused to make a wedding cake for a same-sex couple in 2012. The couple sued. Phillips, a devout Christian who owns Masterpiece Cakeshop in the Denver suburb of Lakewood, said the decision violates his First Amendment rights to free speech and free exercise. "I will stand by my convictions until somebody shuts me down," he told reporters after the ruling.

SHOULD TRUANCY OFFICERS BE KEEPING TRACK OF TEACHERS?

(WNS)--Public school teachers are absent from their classrooms an average of 6 percent of the time, according to a recent study released by the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ). "We may be missing one of the most obvious ways to improve teacher quality," Nancy Waymack from the NCTQ told me. Schools could improve education simply by ensuring regular

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teachers show up for work. Of the teachers in the 40 districts surveyed during the 2012-2013 school year, 16 percent were "chronically absent." This means they missed 18 days or more, equating about one in 10 days of a normal school year. Teachers in Cleveland averaged 15.6 absences per year. In Indianapolis, they missed an average of six classes. According to the Center for American Progress, paying for substitute teachers adds up to at least \$4 billion annually.

INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS MUSLIM MILITANTS STORM CHURCH, KILL 30 IN CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

(WNS)--Muslim gunmen rampaged through a Catholic church compound in the capital of Central African Republic on May 28, killing up to 30 people with gunfire and grenades. Witnesses said the attack happened at the Church of Fatima, where several hundred civilians had sought refuge from mob violence now ravaging Bangui's streets. "We were in the church when we heard the shooting outside," the Rev. Freddy Mboula told the Associated Press. "There were screams and after 30 minutes of gunfire there were bodies everywhere." Another priest at the scene, Rev. Paul Emile Nzale, confirmed about 30 people were killed in the attack. An AP reporter counted at least 20 bodies at one city hospital, where they were taken because the morgue was closed. A second hospital confirmed another three bodies. The church attack is blamed on Muslim fighters whose Seleka coalition was ousted from political power about five months ago. The brutal Muslim rebel regime seized power by force in March 2013.



The Heresy of Consistent Preterism

By Doug Newell IV
of Hortense, Georgia

II Timothy 2:16-18

Consistent preterism is a belief that the return of Jesus Christ has already taken place and that all prophecy has been fulfilled. Proponents of this system will have you to believe that it is merely a slight difference of eschatological opinions; however, I contend that it is a dangerous, cancerous false doctrine that has dire consequence to the faith of some who may fall prey to its malicious teaching. It is a form of the same ancient heresy Paul warned Timothy about in II Timothy 2:15-18, **"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; WHO CONCERNING THE TRUTH HAVE ERRED, SAYING THAT THE RESURRECTION IS PAST ALREADY; and overthrow the faith of some"** (Emphasis DPN). Hymenaeus and Philetus also taught that the future resurrection had already taken place just as modern consistent Preterism teaches today. Unfortunately, it does not stop with the resurrection, but to be consistent they teach that all prophecy is fulfilled. Any prophetic passage in all of Holy Scripture you can name, any future event in God's Word, it has already taken place; everything to the point they teach we are now living in the new Heaven and new



Earth. Through the course of this discourse I intend to bring to light this heresy, which I believe to be in many cases, is a damnable heresy, and show why it is indeed a dangerous error; not simply another view of a "non-essential" matter. This is not a new doctrine, and is believed and propagated even among those that call themselves Landmark Baptists. Hymenaeus and Philetus might have taught church truth. You may have heard a hearty amen from them hearing a message on the Doctrines of Grace; but they taught a deadly heresy, and there are some who do the same. They say they agree with us on church authority, and closed communion; they say they agree with us on other Baptist distinctives, but spread a dangerous heresy.

First, let us look at some of the major points of heresy that the advocates of preterism hold that makes this doctrine RANK heresy. Preterism teaches that Jesus Christ came back and fulfilled all prophecy contained in Holy Writ in AD 70. In the year AD 70 Rome destroyed the temple in Jerusalem lead by Emperor Titus, just as Jesus foretold.

This destruction is a historical fact and it did happen; but the basis of this teaching is that ALL prophecy was fulfilled at this time. They take the works of Josephus and other secular historians to be their authority on the matter as it is necessary for them to rest upon secular accounts as their

foundation and not God's Word. Indeed, some of the things in the first 14 verses of the Matthew 24 were fulfilled, but not in total. The first 14 verses of Matthew 24 deal with the entire time period prior to the rapture, and then, up through the first 3 1/2 years of the tribulation period. They were not fulfilled in total in AD 70. Jesus mentioned the destruction of the temple in Matthew 24:2, **"And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."** Jesus is speaking of the AD destruction of the temple by Rome. But the next verse is very important to understanding the rest of the chapter. Matthew 24:3, **"And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?"** The disciples after having thought of what the Lord had said asked three questions. Question 1. When shall these things be? Question 2. What shall be the sign of Thy coming? Question 3. What shall be the sign of the end of the world? Jesus answers these three questions throughout the rest of the chapter. The rest of the 24th chapter is not dealing explicitly with verse two, but answering the questions of verse 3. The premise that all things were fulfilled at this time is taken by the Preterists saying that the remainder of the 24th chapter of Matthew deals with verse two and the year AD 70, and this assertion forces all prophecy into that time period by taking Scripture out of context, or spiritualizing the Scriptures instead of a literal interpretation of Scripture. They rest their proof of Christ's so-called

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AD 70 coming on the historical works of men, and Josephus in particular. You cannot take the scripture and prove such a belief system. A person could read their Bible and learn from the Bible alone the truth of the church and desire to be a Baptist, a person could read their Bible and learn the truth of Sovereign Grace from the Bible alone; however, you could not read your Bible and become a Preterist because they rely extensively on extra-Biblical testimony. **“Let God be true and every man a liar.”** In order for this theory that Matthew 24 was fulfilled in AD 70 to fit, everything else in Scripture has to shift to make room and thus the dangerous descent of this profanation. Preterism must then find someplace to put the time of Jacob’s trouble, so they teach the tribulation period was from AD 63 to AD 70. However, dealing with the end of the tribulation God’s Word says in Revelation 1:7 **“Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.”** Every eye did not see the Lord Jesus Christ. When He comes, EVERY eye shall see Him! Only gross spiritualization of Holy Writ could explain away such passages as “every eye shall see him when He comes in glory.” Matthew 24:30 **“And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”** It is hard to nail down the whole of Preterism, because like most heresy, there are so many different interpretations. One interpretation of this verse is

that Christ’s glory mentioned here was the glory of Emperor Titus and the Roman army and that Christ was guiding the army as He did Israel in the wilderness. This Scripture is referencing the second advent of the second coming of the Lord Jesus. There will be a sign in Heaven, and all the tribes, notice, all the tribes, not just Jerusalem, but from America to Australia, all the people of the earth shall mourn, and they, the whole earth, shall SEE the Son of man coming in the clouds, with power and GREAT glory. You would think that if the Lord Jesus Christ came back in great glory, and an event that the whole world saw and mourned over that it would be documented by every tribe and people on Earth. It is not documented because it has not happened yet.

The most vital point of the Christian faith that preterism stands contrary to, is on the resurrection, claiming it is already past and even goes so far as to a complete denial of a bodily resurrection, claiming only a spiritual resurrection. In order to make their AD 70 theory fit, their doctrine now has to do something with the resurrection. Preterism, like most dangerous heresy, will use the same words as you and I, but apply their own definition. For example, if you ask a preterist if they believe in the resurrection, they will answer yes. If you ask them if they believe in the resurrection of Christ, they will say yes; but what they mean by resurrection and what the Bible means by resurrection are two completely different ideas. Preterists, when speaking of resurrection, mean a spiritual resurrection, or the new birth, it has nothing to do with the body, and if you press a consistent preterist for an answer they will, if they will be honest with you, deny Christ’s bodily resurrection

as well. Very deceptive, is it not? That is why it is dangerous, you must define the terms every step of the way to find out what they truly believe. General questions, unfortunately, will not get you to the bottom of their belief system. Notice, in the frequently asked questions of a prominent website dedicated to preterism, which we will continue to refer to, concerning the resurrection: “Preterism does teach the resurrection of the dead, however it does not subscribe to a physical resurrection of bodies” (PlanetPreterist.com FAQ). What kind of resurrection is that? What blatant double talk. Preterism is directly contrary to the Word of God which very clearly and quite often speaks of the bodily resurrection of the saints of God. **“But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you”** (Rom. 8:11). The danger of this teaching is if our resurrection is past and if there is no bodily resurrection for us, then there was also no resurrection of Jesus Christ, and if no resurrection of Christ, our hope is in vain! Please read the 15th chapter of I Corinthians. Our future resurrection is tied to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paul put himself on the line, his credibility; the faith once delivered, salvation and the work of Christ all on the fact and necessity of the resurrection. If Christ did not rise, then, like a house of cards, it is all coming down. But, He is RISEN, and risen BODILY. You have hundreds of eye witnesses, credible witnesses of the friends of Christ, also the enemies of Christ, most of all, the divinely inspired record of the Holy Scriptures; and I know by faith, the faith given to me by the risen Lord that He bodily

arose from the dead. This makes preterism a damnable heresy. If you deny our resurrection, you deny the resurrection of Christ, you deny the resurrection of Christ, you are not saved! No matter what you say about doctrines of grace, the church, landmarkism, baptism, if you deny the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ, you are on your way to Hell. **“But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept”** (I Cor. 15:13-20).

Preterism teaches that the time of Jacob’s trouble, or the great tribulation period, has already taken place. **“For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be”** (Matt. 24:21). The destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 was not the worst tribulation the world has ever seen. For the people who lived during that time, it was indeed terrible tribulation, but can it be said that it was worse than the Sodom and Gomorrah, the Genesis flood, or more recently, WWI and WWII? Can that time be said to be worse than the Jewish holocaust, the millions killed by Communist China, the countless massacres

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that fill the pages of history? With the innumerable times of tribulation that was before and since that time, it cannot be held that AD 70 can be considered the worst time of tribulation. Without question, there will not be a worse time on the face of the earth than that great tribulation period (Revelation 8: 7- 13). **“Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!”** Not woe to Jerusalem or woe to the Middle East, but woe to the inhabitants of the earth. The problem with this philosophy is there is always a slick answer for everything, but not a scriptural answer for it and **“by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.”** With this doctrine they must also say that God is finished with Israel, contrary to Romans 11. Consider the words of Duncan McKenzie, a columnist for Planet Preterist. **“The Coming of Jesus in Revelation 19 is referring to the one and only Second Coming at AD 70. With harlot Israel destroyed, Jesus comes and defeats the beast from the abyss.”** They teach that Israel is destroyed. Israel is MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH according to their heretical doctrine; which also causes God to disannul His everlasting covenant with Abraham and David. A slippery slope, for now the logical and natural consequence is that God has denied Himself, lied to Abraham and David, and gone back on His Word. The consequences here are dire. Hebrews 6:11-20 proves God’s promises are sure for us because they were

sure for Abraham, and God is unchangeable and cannot lie. For this cause we have full assurance of hope and we have an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. If the promise to Abraham was no good and could be disannulled, so could the promise to us. But praise God He cannot deny Himself, and His Word is sure.

Preterism teaches the Satan is now in the lake of fire, that he is out of the picture. If Satan is at the present thrust in the lake of fire, what about I Peter 5:8? **“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”** According to preterism, this verse has nothing for us in our day because Satan is bound and merely a historical figure. All the Scripture concerning the Devil does not apply to us anymore by the accounts of this heresy. It is all historical information. This points us to another great problem with Preterism; it takes away so many promises and warnings in the Scripture that are directly related to the second coming of Christ and future events. Notice the Scripture that we just quoted. For the preterist, since the Devil is out of the picture, we have no need to be sober, but let us look at the context of the passage in verses 6-10. **“Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his**

eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.” The challenge for the preterist is to tell us what is historical and what is not. If the verse in the middle is historical about Satan, what about the sentence before telling us that Christ cares for us? Does He care for us, or only those historical characters that had to resist the Devil? Proper interpretation and plain sense tells us that those whom Christ cares for are also the very same that are to be sober and vigilant. The command to be sober goes with the same thought as the promise of Christ making us perfect, stablishing and strengthening and settling us. Who is Scripture written for, and how are we to read Scripture if the commands of the New Testament no longer apply to us? Denial of Scripture is a fruit of preterism, which leads to picking and choosing what one wants to obey, and casting aside what you do not. I was once told that the New Testament is to be read no differently than genealogies of the Old Testament, it is God’s Word but you have to pick out what you can use, and view the rest as historical information. That, unfortunately, is their view of Scripture, and only the beginning of the errors. There are far too many Scriptures that are directly tied to future things to list everyone here so we will consider only a few. Many of our blessings, encouragements, commands and warnings are tied into the teaching of the coming of Jesus Christ, thus making the verses irrelevant to us if what they teach were true. Not only those particular verses, but the entire context of the verse are lost as well as we have seen in our example of I Peter 5. But why stop there, if the context of the passage does not apply, what about

the entire epistle? Notice a few Scriptures that are linked with the future. The Bible says to look for the Saviour (Titus 2:12-13), if He has already come back, then that verse does not apply to us anymore which tells us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts and to live soberly and godly in the present world while we are looking for Christ to return. Preterism destroys our hope; consider Romans 8:24-25, **“For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.”** Please consider the context of this verse, this is not merely hope in going to Heaven, Romans 8:23, **“And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.”** The preterists believe that the only resurrection is a spiritual resurrection that happens when you are saved; but how can one hope of the adoption, the redemption of our body with a spiritual resurrection? If the resurrection takes place at salvation, how could a saved person be looking towards it? That is how preterism destroys our hope, you can not hope for something in the past, but you can only hope for FUTURE things. Look in Titus 2:13 again **“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”** Our hope (future) is the glorious APPEARING of Christ, so we have no blessed hope any longer according to their tenets. Also, the weapons of war God gave us are both useless and unnecessary if this teaching is true. **“Finally, my brethren, be strong**

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in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil (Eph. 6:10-11). Why have amour to protect and war against an enemy that is already gone? When pointing out their error, I have found that one of the cries of preterism is they claim to hold to 'Scripture only' and put no value on confessions or creeds, as if to say that they are relying only upon the Scripture. Having a belief that differs from the faith of the historical Baptists is supposed to be a pious badge of honor and an example of their stand for God's Word rather than men; which is good and right, we should never, ever, ever put the words of men above the words of God, but this is a deceptive tactic to hide their error and validate the fact of being opposed to historic Christianity. Beware of anyone who will not put into writing what they believe or those who object to written statements of belief. We, too, believe that Scripture is the sole authority, but as Baptists, we have never been afraid to have what we believe about the Scriptures written down for all to see. It is a cop-out to say "I do not live by confessions or creeds or articles of faith, only the Bible"; the person who says that, oft times has a false doctrine or false teaching they are trying to hide or are embarrassed by their belief. This is indeed dangerous teaching for it does away with much Scripture.

If what they say is true, we are living in the new heavens and new earth. "Therefore what makes the Heavens and Earth "new" is not an act of God physically re-creating them, but a renewing and reconciliation of all things

in Christ, through his sacrifice, resurrection and return in A.D. 70. The very presence of Christ (his parousia) is what gives the Heavens and Earth a renewed character." (Planet Preterism). Here is what God says, **"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away"** (Rev. 21:1-4). Surely we know that God has not wiped away all tears, and we know that there is pain this very hour. We can look out our window and know that New Jerusalem is not here and that Christ does not dwell bodily with us now. Do you live in the world of Revelation 21:1-4? I do not, not yet anyway. I look about and see war, famine, murders, destruction, poverty, pollution, crime, and all manner of sin. I live in a perilous (II Timothy 3:1) kind of world. To say that we live in Revelation 21:1-4 is absurd and preposterous. It is hard to believe that one could say they believed the Bible and hold to such unorthodoxy. If this is the new heaven and new earth, and this is what a life with no pain, tears, or sorrow is all about, I am of all men most miserable.

If preterism is true, there are a lot of unanswered questions. Why preach or baptize? **"And**

Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matt. 28:18-20). If all has been fulfilled and we are in the end of the world, that means our job is done. Also, the Preterist that does preach the gospel should have many saved when witnessing, because Satan is not here to hinder the gospel (II Cor. 4:1-6). The Bible teaches that the work of the church and preaching of the gospel needs to continue until the end of the world, and being in the end of the world according to preterism, then why serve God in His church? Why take the Lord's supper? We are to take it **"till he come"** (I Cor. 11:26-27), and if He has come, then we should have stopped taking it a long time ago and taking the Lord's Supper would be a vicious, deceptive lie according to Preterism. Why is there no post AD 70 Biblical instruction? Since the Bible was penned before the end of the first century, and all things came to an end in AD 70, why not provide us with some instruction? Why did not John, or Paul, or Peter give us some idea what WE should do once all things were fulfilled? The answer is because when all things are fulfilled, we will be with God. We will dwell with Him through all eternity, and our hope will be realized! In fact, most scholars believe that the book of Revelation was written well after AD 70, some put the date almost 30 years after, thus making John a historian rather than penning a prophecy, despite John saying seven times in

the book of Revelation that it was a prophecy.

Briefly, let me show you some of their so called 'proof texts' of preterism. Matthew 10:23, **"But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come."** They claim that Jesus was telling the disciples that once they preached over the cities of Israel, Jesus would return. But Jesus was telling the disciples that He was coming after them, as they preached, He would come to them again before they were finished. When you are persecuted in this city go to another, and you will not have preached in all the cities before I come behind you. This is His earthly ministry Matthew 11:1, **"And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities."** They claim that Matthew 16:28, **"Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom,"** refers to His second coming, but he is speaking of what happened in Matthew 17:1-9, the transfiguration. Next, Matthew 24:34, **"Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled."** Preterist claim 'this generation' is the generation standing with Christ as He was speaking. But Jesus was speaking to the generation that shall see the signs He spoke of, not the generation standing with Him. Matthew 24:30-34, **"And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the**

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clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors."

Milburn Cockrell, in his book *An Exposition of Matthew 24* well says "I believe that 'this generation' must be taken literally. This is the natural and normal meaning of the word in the Bible ... Hence the meaning is the generation that lives to see the specific signs of the Great Tribulation and the signs in the heavens will also witness the return of Christ and the setting up of the kingdom."

The Bible is clear on how Christians must deal with preterism in II Timothy 2:16-18, **"But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some."** Preterism is expressed as profane, or wicked and heathenish, mixed with vain babbling, or empty sounded fruitless talk. God has ordered us to shun it, to stay away from it because it eats like a canker. It brings death, if left unchecked and its evil wicked influence spreads. The result of preterism has eternal ramifications, and Scripture says it will **"overthrow the faith of some."** This teaching can not be tolerated, it can not

be compromised with, and it can never be allowed in the Lord's churches. A teaching that overthrows the faith of some and denies the faith once delivered is dangerous, deadly, and damnable.



Making A Decision for Christ

By Curtis Pugh
of Poteau, Oklahoma

It seems that in modern religious America the word repentance is actually seldom used. When it is used, many times people use the word to mean making a decision to pray a prayer asking to be saved. Thus many people equate "making a decision for Christ" with repentance. What does all this have to do with you who have had an experience of grace? Are we just quibbling about words? This is a vital matter. It means that your lost relatives, friends and neighbors – the people to whom you witness – have very likely been told that all they need do is decide for Christ. The question is this: is repentance the same thing as deciding to trust Christ? Are they the same thing or are they two radically different things? This is not merely an academic or theological point to be discussed and debated. It is not of minor importance. This has to do with how God saves sinners. If all you did was make a decision to pray and ask Jesus to save you and that is not Bible repentance, you are yet lost in your sins. Why do we say that? Because New Testament preaching has to do with repentance. When Paul summarized his life's work, he

said that he had gone about both publicly and privately, **"Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ"** (Acts 20:21). Both John the Baptist and the Lord Jesus Christ preached repentance as a necessity. Jesus plainly said, **"...except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish"** (Luke 13:3). This message of repentance is the New Testament message. Repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ are at the same time both gifts and requirements of God. They cannot be manufactured by the human will. All who have not repented and believed shall perish!

The word "decision" appears only twice in the Bible. It does not appear in the New Testament at all! It is used twice in the same verse: Joel 3:14. There we read: **"Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision"**. The Hebrew word translated "decision" is used only 18 times in the Bible – all in the Old Testament, of course. Of those 18 times, it is translated most often as "gold" (6 times); 5 times as "diligent"; twice as "decision"; twice as "threshing instrument"; as "sharp" one time; and one time as "sharp things". Barnes says it is better understood as a place of "sharp severe judgment". Jamieson, Fausset and Brown say it is "the valley in which they are to meet their determined doom. The same as 'the valley of Jehoshaphat', that is, 'the valley of judgment'". Comparing this verse with its context, especially Joel 3:2 and 3:12, it is clear this speaks of God's judgment of the Gentiles. Some have said it is better understood as "the valley of concision" - i.e. the valley of cutting off. One thing is certain: it has nothing to do with

"making a decision for Christ". Neither the related words "decide" nor "deciding" appears in the Bible. The word "decided" is found one time speaking of a king. Again this usage of the word has nothing to do with "deciding to trust Jesus". In fact, no New Testament example exists of anyone telling a lost person to "make a decision for Christ" or "deciding to pray and ask Jesus into your heart" or anything that remotely resembles such a thing. The idea that making a decision for Christ results in the new birth just cannot be found in the Bible. And as we shall show, repentance is much more than making a decision.

The once-popular New Hampshire Baptist Confession (A.D. 1833) says: "We believe that Repentance and Faith are sacred duties, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God; whereby being deeply convinced of our guilt, danger, and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession, and supplication for mercy; at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as our Prophet, Priest, and King, and relying on him alone as the only and all-sufficient Saviour." Those old time Baptists understood that repentance was not "deciding for Christ". Today's preaching goes like this: if you will make a decision (pray the sinner's prayer, etc.) you will be born again. Old time Baptists believed that the regenerating Spirit of God worked repentance and faith in the inner man. They believed that the regenerating Spirit was the cause of repentance and faith. While preaching is necessary, the Bible teaches that God must give the gift of repentance. This is clearly seen in Paul's words

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to Timothy in II Timothy 2:25 where he wrote: **“In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth”**. Repentance must be given by God according to that verse! The same old Baptist confession quoted above includes a great statement about the new birth and what it produces. We quote: “We believe that, in order to be saved, sinners must be regenerated, or born again; that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind; that it is effected in a manner above our comprehension by the power of the Holy Spirit, in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel; and that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance, and faith, and newness of life. Baptists of former days believe that repentance and faith were evidences the new birth (regeneration) and not the cause of it. They believed that repentance and faith along with a changed life were the evidence of an experience of grace. Repentance is not a product of man’s effort. Repentance in the Bible is not ever just a mental decision. Jesus said: **“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit”** (John 3:6). Anything that flesh produces is just flesh!

Making a decision is a mental exercise. It may be the result of desire or persuasion. Fear of punishment or a desire for the perceived benefits of being a Christian may motivate a person to do what the preacher says. He may “decide for Christ,” “pray the sinner’s prayer,” or whatever effort is required by the preacher or

church. We must hasten to say that this decision idea is a requirement of preachers and churches only. It is not a requirement of the Bible. The fact is that repentance has a conjoined twin and constant companion which is faith. These two are of a much different nature than a mental decision. Repentance and faith are components resulting from an experience of grace! Making a decision is a work of man and his mental faculties. In contrast to this mental decision idea, the Bible tells us how God brings repentance to men. **“For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death”** (II Cor. 7:10). No man can break his own heart over his sin. Only God can cause a man or woman to truly mourn because they have sinned against a holy God! And it is this thing called godly sorrow that works repentance! Speaking of true believers who had fallen into the careless sin of not maintaining the purity of their church, but who had repented of that evil, Paul wrote; **“For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter”** (II Cor. 7:11). Seldom do modern Baptist preachers utter the words “sorrowed after a godly sort”! Godly sorrow accomplishes things in the life of those who experience it! Paul listed in the last quoted verse some things that godly sorrow “wrought” or worked in the congregation to whom he wrote. True repentance has lasting results because it is a gift from God. Those who merely make a decision

for Christ may reverse their decision. People can and often do change their minds. They often later decide against what they had previously decided for. But Paul wrote that there is a **“...repentance to salvation not to be repented of...”** (II Cor. 7:10). Repentance to salvation once truly experienced is never repented of! Nobody who ever experienced godly sorrow – the kind that worked repentance in them ever “un-repented.” Many people who merely decided for Christ later decided for the world – they changed their decision. They never experienced God’s grace. They never were saved although they did what they were told: they made a decision. We say again: repentance has a conjoined twin and constant companion which is faith. These two are of a much different nature than a mental decision. Can anything be clearer than that? Are you one who has merely made a decision for Christ? Are you satisfied with that? Or do you see that there is more to repentance than just deciding to ask Jesus into your heart?

Being a Baptist, this preacher feels free to speak of the sad situation in which the Baptists of this era find themselves. For the most part they have opted (decided!) to follow the Arminian route except for what they often call the doctrine of “eternal security.” We, on the other hand, fear that it is a deceptive and damnable heresy to teach that the new birth is brought about by the human effort of making a decision for Christ! And that is exactly what they teach. This preacher is in company with Charles Spurgeon the well-known British Baptist preacher who said, “The doctrine of justification itself, as preached by an Arminian, is nothing but the doctrine of salvation by works...” If Spurgeon was right - if we are right, most Baptists are preaching a false

gospel of salvation by works apart from a genuine experience of grace. The Bible says: **“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast”** (Eph. 2:8-9). Regarding God it is written: **“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began”** (II Tim. 1:9). What a thought! God’s grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. Put that in your pipe and smoke it! The question is not have you decided for Christ! The question is, have you experienced God’s grace? Stated another way: has godly sorrow worked repentance in you? Do not be deceived into thinking that God offers grace which a sinner can either accept or receive. God does not offer His grace to be trampled upon by wicked unbelievers. The grace of God is not passive nor is it weak so as to be successfully resisted by puny human beings. Rather, the grace of God brings salvation! That is what the Bible says in Titus 2:11-13: **“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”** Do you understand from this passage that the grace of God actually and really does two things: 1) it really does bring salvation – it does not bring an offer of salvation which can be refused; and 2) it really does teach us how to live. We ask again, have you had an experience of

♦ (Continued on page 163)

Making A Decision

(Continued from page 162) ♦

grace? Or have you merely decided for Christ? The first is the Biblical way of salvation. The second – the notion of deciding for Christ – has no Biblical basis whatsoever. It is a wicked innovation of man brought in by men who must not know anything of the free grace of the omnipotent sovereign God of the Bible. If you have not had an experience of grace my desire for you is that God will not let you rest in your misguided self-confidence in what you have done. Rather, that He will show you your helplessness and helplessness in the midst of godly sorrow that will work repentance to salvation in your innermost being. May God be pleased to break your heart over your sin and thereby work true repentance in you!



ANNOUNCEMENTS

On May 17th, 2014, Elder Wendell Paul Furlong was called home. His earthly sojourn of 75 years ended at his home in Burnside, Kentucky.



Bro. Wendell was born March 3rd, 1939. He pastored several Baptist churches since 1960 in Kentucky. Bro. Wendell was a member of Grace Baptist Church in Science Hill, KY. Please remember his wife Juda, and the family in your prayers.

“...and thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty” (I Sam. 20:18).

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Northport, AL and pastor Todd Bryant would like

to announce a Bible Conference August 1st through 3rd. Scheduled speakers are Elders Mark Campbell and John Fry. The theme of the conference is “Where the Bible Meets Life.” All are invited to attend.

The Lord's Baptist Church and pastor Larry Killion would like to announce that the *Landmark Edition of the New Testament* (KJV Study Bible) is now available. This is an 872 page New Testament Study Bible with footnotes written from a Landmark Baptist point of view on church truth. It is a work completed by several cooperating contemporary ordained elders of the Landmark Baptist faith. All contributors are thankful to be free from the rules of a human king for this edition. This book is presented for the edification of God's elect and a clearer understanding of New Testament ecclesiology. The paperback edition is \$23.99, hardcover edition is \$34.99, also an ebook edition is available for \$3.99. These can be ordered from bookstore.xlibris.com.

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Galena, OH is in need of a pastor. Any interested candidates possessing the qualifications and traits concerning the office as found in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 are asked to contact either of the following: Bro. Randy Coffey at (614) 871-2406 or email recoffeypot@aol.com, or Bro. Joe Vass at (614) 846-8699 or email jami joe@wowway.com.

The Glade Creek Baptist Church, Summersville, WV., is in need of a pastor. This church believes and preaches the doctrines of grace and church truth. Any interested Elder should call Bro. Rodney Perkins

at (304) 742-3050 or Bro. Allen Frame at (304) 742-5775.

The Faith Missionary Baptist Church of Cobbitty, South Wales, Australia is in need of a pastor. For more information please contact David Jackson at 4 Station Street, Thirlmere, NSW 2572, Australia or Email: shellie45@bigpond.com.au.

The Victory Baptist Church of Chehalis, Washington is in need of a pastor. Any interested brother may call Gerry Greisen at (360) 985-7975, or Mark Fenison at (360) 751-2929.

The Grace Missionary Baptist Church of Marion, IL is in need of a replacement pastor. Elder Raymond T. Ellis is the current pastor, but due to his age, is needing to resign. The church believes and preaches the doctrines of grace and the local church. Any interested Elder may contact Elder Ellis at (618) 983-8697 or Bro. Gary Ratley at (618) 841-0228.

The Twinbrook Hills Baptist Church of Hamilton, OH is prayerfully seeking a pastor. Organized in 1938, the church holds to historic Baptist truths, including the Doctrines of Grace. Please visit the church's website at <http://twinbrook.net> to view the Church Constitution and other items that describe our beliefs and show what the church is doing today. Please contact Bro. Chris Willis at Elohimfirst@gmail.com for more information.

Any church that is without a pastor, please feel free to send your information in regards to the pastoral position for publication in these announcements.

BЕРЕА BAPTIST BROADCAST

Financial Report

5-1-2014 to 5-31-2014

Beginning Balance	\$7,033.33
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	225.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	200.00
Calvary Ind. B. C., Everson, WA	100.00
.....	525.00
TOTAL	7,558.33
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time	363.98
Program Production	195.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	558.98
.....	6,999.35
Interest06
ENDING BALANCE	\$6,999.41



BЕРЕА BAPTIST BANNER

Financial Report

5-1-2014 to 5-31-2014

Beginning Balance	\$2,289.60
RECEIPTS:	
Amazing Grace B. C., Stockdale, TX	50.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	300.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL	60.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX	50.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	300.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV	313.45
Carol Willitt, Edgewater, FL	50.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL	25.00
Eve Knowles, Scarborough, ME	100.00
Faith B. C., Lynn, AR	12.50
Gail Knowles, Scarborough, ME	20.00
Grace B. C., Winston-Salem, NC	50.00
Grace M. B. C., Marion, IL	50.00
Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK	35.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV	100.00
Landmark B. C., Moncks Corner, SC	100.00
The Lord's Church, Goose Creek, SC	50.00
Michael Sherman, Ashland, KY	30.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH	100.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN	50.00
Parkway Landmark B. C., Springfield, OR	100.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	100.00
Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR	50.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX	30.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	25.00
Subscriptions	32.00
Anonymous	1,210.00
Dividing checks	300.00
Sub Total	\$3,842.95
TOTAL	\$6,132.55
EXPENDITURES:	
Printing	490.00
Postage	804.45
Wages	2,300.00
FICA	175.96
Supplies	136.07
Dividing checks	300.00
Total Expenditures	\$4,206.48
.....	1,926.07
Bank charge	-13.00
ENDING BALANCE	\$1,913.07

GLEANINGS



The State of Marriage

(WNS)--Until 2003, same-sex marriage was banned in all 50 states. But a lot has changed in the last decade. Seventeen states now allow same-sex marriage, either through legislative action or voter referendum. After the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the federal Defense of Marriage Act in 2013, judges in six states have struck down statues upholding traditional marriage. More judges likely will follow suit, and the question of whether states can determine what constitutes marriage within their borders will eventually be decided by the nation's highest court.

JUDICIAL ACTIVISM IN 2013 AND 2014:

- Pennsylvania—A federal judge declares the state's voter-approved ban unconstitutional. Gov. Tom Corbett decides not to appeal.
- Oregon—A district judge declares its voter-approved ban unconstitutional.
- Idaho—A federal judge ruled the state's 2006, voter-approved ban is unconstitutional.

- Arkansas—A county circuit judge strikes down the state's ban, approved by voters in 2004.
- Ohio—Judge orders state to recognize same-sex marriages performed in other states. Ruling stayed pending appeal.
- Tennessee—A federal appeals court stays a lower court judge's orders that the state must recognize three same-sex marriages performed in other states. The ruling does not yet apply to other couples. The state is appealing the decision. Same-sex marriage was banned by constitutional amendment in 2006.
- Michigan—Constitutional ban overturned by federal judge. Judge's ruling stayed pending appeal.
- Texas—Constitutional ban overturned by federal judge. Judge's ruling stayed by the U.S. Supreme Court pending appeal.
- Kentucky—Judge orders state to recognize same-sex marriages performed in other states.
- Virginia—Constitutional ban overturned by federal judge. Judge's ruling stayed pending appeal.
- Oklahoma—Constitutional ban overturned by federal judge. Judge's ruling stayed pending appeal.
- Utah—Constitutional ban overturned by federal judge. Judge's ruling stayed by the U.S. Supreme Court pending appeal.

- (2013)
- LEGALIZED IN 2013:**
- New Mexico—by state Supreme Court ruling
 - Illinois—by state statute
 - Hawaii—by state statute
 - New Jersey—by a judge's ruling
 - California—by a federal judge's ruling in 2010. The ruling did not go into effect until the Supreme Court upheld it in 2013.

- Minnesota—by state statute
- Delaware—by state statute
- Rhode Island—by state statute

- LEGALIZED IN 2012:**
- Maine—by voter referendum
 - Maryland—by voter referendum
 - Washington—voter referendum

- LEGALIZED IN 2011 AND 2009:**
- New York—by state statute (2011)
 - New Hampshire—by state statute
 - Vermont—by state statute
 - Iowa—by state Supreme Court ruling

- LEGALIZED IN 2008:**
- Connecticut—by state Supreme Court ruling

- FIRST LEGALIZATION—2003:**
- Massachusetts—by state supreme court ruling

- BANNED IN 2012:**
- Nevada—Constitutional ban upheld by a federal judge, under review in federal appeals court

- North Carolina—by constitutional amendment

BANNED BY CONSTITUTIONAL

- AMENDMENT IN 2008:**
- Arizona
 - Florida

BANNED BY CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT IN 2006:

- Colorado
- Idaho
- South Carolina
- South Dakota
- Wisconsin

BANNED BY CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT IN 2005 AND 2004:

- Alabama
- Arkansas
- Georgia
- Kansas (2005)
- Louisiana
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- Montana
- North Dakota
- Oregon—Recognizes same-sex marriages performed in other states

EARLY BANS:

- Nebraska—by constitutional amendment in 2000
- West Virginia—by state statute in 2000
- Alaska—by voter referendum in 1998
- Indiana—by state law in 1997
- Pennsylvania—by state statute in 1996
- Wyoming—by state statute in 1977



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